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Thesis

THE PLACE OF THE CHURCH

IN THE

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Submitted by

Clarence Westphal

(A.B, Western Union, 1927)

In partial fulfilment of requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

1928

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PART I. INTRODUCTION

The proper use of leisure time is one of the greatest needs of modern society. Sociologists agree that the way in which a person spends his leisure time is indicative of his social status and his mental outlook. It is, therefore, of great importance that the schools should give attention to the problem of the proper use of leisure time. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the importance of the play in the curriculum of the schools.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

Play is a natural and necessary part of human life. It is a means of self-expression and a way of learning about the world. Play is also a means of socialization and a way of developing the child's personality. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the importance of the play in the curriculum of the schools. Play is a natural and necessary part of human life. It is a means of self-expression and a way of learning about the world. Play is also a means of socialization and a way of developing the child's personality. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the importance of the play in the curriculum of the schools.

The importance of play in the curriculum of the schools is often overlooked. Play is a natural and necessary part of human life. It is a means of self-expression and a way of learning about the world. Play is also a means of socialization and a way of developing the child's personality. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the importance of the play in the curriculum of the schools.

THE PLACE OF THE CHURCH IN THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE

PART I. INTRODUCTION

The proper use of leisure time is one of the greatest needs of modern society. Sociologists agree that the future of civilization is dependent to a large extent upon the way in which the individual uses his spare time. In view of these facts, the problem of the people's play is one which should give us most earnest concern. Edward Alsworth Ross says that "the three master forces fixing the mundane welfare of human beings are Work, Living Conditions, and Recreation."¹ Only of recent years have students of society begun to realize the importance of the third factor in the lives of the people. The Church has long recognized the problem of the people's play but its attitude has largely been one of negation and suppression. It has looked upon amusement as a destructive force which accomplished no good and had no place in a truly Christian society. We are now coming to realize that play may be used as a very effective means of developing those finer qualities of character which make up the highest type of American citizenship.

The influence of recreation upon conduct is considered to be very great by thinking people today. Professor Ellwood says, "Not serious occupations, indeed, but play and amusement too often have the preponderant role in de-

¹Edwards, Richard Henry, Popular Amusements, p. 5.

termining moral character in the young."¹ One of the great causes of crime and immorality has been the failure of society to provide wholesome recreation for the youth of the nation. Commercialized amusements have been permitted to exploit our youth for mercenary gain and the ruined lives resulting from this deplorable procedure have seemingly been considered of no consequence. Instead of using social pressure as a regenerating influence in the life of the individual we have been transferring it into a force which degrades and brutalizes personality and stifles the highest instincts in man.

In view of the tremendous influence which recreation exerts upon human conduct it is imperative that the Church concern itself with the problem of raising the standards of social life to a place where the play life of the people will become a force for good rather than a force for evil. No one will deny the fact that much of the recreational life of the nation is of a very high quality, conducive of the best type of Christian citizenship. Likewise, no one who is acquainted with the facts of modern society can truthfully deny that a great deal of popular amusement is corrupting the morals of our youth and defeating the very purpose for which the Church exists. The church which is conscientiously endeavoring to influence the conduct of the young people of today is forced to be very vitally concerned about the problem of popular amusements.

¹Ellwood, Charles A., the Reconstruction of Religion, p. 264.

It is the purpose of this thesis to consider the recreation problem only from the standpoint of middle and later adolescent youth, ranging in age from 15 to 24 years. The words "recreation" and "play" are used interchangeably, referring primarily to the distinctly social activities of young people and not to the purely gymnastic features of recreation. The aim of this dissertation is to show that the Church has a definite responsibility regarding social life of young people and that its main task is to educate the public to the recreational needs of the community and to supplement the already existing agencies. The first part deals with the nature and value of recreation; the second part treats of the attitude of the Church toward the social needs of young people; the third part considers the most outstanding solution of the problem which experience has thus far proved to be quite satisfactory. The theory is presented that the solution to this social problem for middle and later adolescent is to be found, for the most part, in an effective program of expressional activity which aids the individual to transfer theory into practice, and not in purely fun-provoking socials. Working together produces a deeper spirit of fellowship than playing together, and the most effective way for the Church to meet the social needs of its young people is to provide the type of expressional activity which will be of the greatest value to the individual and to the community.

It is the purpose of this thesis to consider the
various phases of the development of the
human mind, and to show that the process is
not a simple one, but a complex one, involving
the interaction of many factors. The first
stage of development is the period of infancy,
when the child is born and begins to learn
about the world. This is followed by the
period of childhood, when the child learns
to walk, talk, and think. The third stage
is the period of adolescence, when the
teenager begins to develop a sense of
identity and independence. The final stage
is the period of adulthood, when the
individual reaches a state of maturity and
is able to contribute to society. The
process of development is a continuous one,
and it is the purpose of this thesis to
show that the human mind is a complex
organism, capable of great achievement.

PART II.

THE NATURE AND VALUE OF RECREATION.

PART II. THE NATURE AND VALUE OF RECREATION.

A. NOTABLE THEORIES OF PLAY.

The recognition of the value of play is practically universal. There is some difference of opinion among authorities concerning the nature of play but its worth to the individual is almost unquestioned. Several attempts have been made to explain the nature and meaning of recreation. A knowledge of these theories of leisure time activities is one of the first requisites of an understanding of the play movement and its place in the program of Religious Education.

One of the most widely accepted theories is the one propounded by William James and Karl Groos and is commonly known as the Practice Theory.¹ Its advocates maintain that play is chiefly a preparation for the serious work of life. There is a great deal of truth in the belief that the loss of play instinct in adults tends to lessen the capacity for effective service in professional activity. When man is able to carry over into his work the energy and enthusiasm which he finds in his recreational activities, he discovers the result to be a lessening of nervous strain and a much greater capacity for effective work. Thus recreation for the adult has not only an inherent value but its benefits are carried over into the "service" work of life.

Another explanation of play is found in the Surplus-

¹Cabot, Richard Clarke, What Men Live By, ch. 10.

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The University of Chicago is a private, non-sectarian, non-profit institution of higher learning. It was founded in 1837 and is one of the oldest and most distinguished universities in the United States. The University is organized into several divisions, including the Faculty of Divinity, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Science, the Faculty of Letters, and the Faculty of Fine Arts. The University is also home to several research centers and institutes, including the Center for Advanced Study in Theoretical Physics, the Center for the Study of the History of Ideas, and the Center for the Study of the History of the United States.

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energy Theory, held by Schiller, Spencer, Colozza and Guts-muth. According to this point of view, "play can be explained physiologically as due to the increase of surplus energy which is not needed to fulfill the ends of existence and tends to act along the lines of imitation important to the welfare of the animal."¹ This need for an outlet for the expression of the energy not needed in providing for the necessities of life is present in later Adolescence as well as in childhood. The urge within youth to express its emotions must not be thwarted but directed into useful channels. This theory calls attention to the important fact that as civilization advances and the burden of necessary toil becomes lighter, man has an increasing amount of surplus energy which is not needed in facing the bare necessities of life. The problem of the proper use of leisure time grows in importance as civilization advances.

The human mechanism is so constructed that rest is essential to its proper functioning. Mere inactivity is not the only method of meeting this need for rest. A change of occupation is often more helpful than freedom from activity. To the proponent of the Re-creation Theory,² play becomes a means of recuperation for tired muscles and nerves. Recreation becomes a form of relaxation. Cabot expresses this truth in his reference to recreation as an Art when he says it "carries us off into a far country, more beautiful, more

¹Richardson, Norman E., The Church at Play, p. 47.

²Richardson, Norman E., The Church at Play, ch. 3, p 49

poignant, more tragic, perhaps more humorous and sparkling, perhaps nobler and more heroic, than is shown us in the workshop or the home. We emerge refreshed by this intense experience, and for a few precious minutes we look upon the world as if our eyes had never been dulled and stupefied by repetition and inattention, never lost the child's divine power of surprise."¹

The last theory of play we shall consider is that of Recapitulation.² Among its most noted exponents are Hall, James, Wundt, Lee, and Gulick. According to this theory, play not only serves as a means of preparation for life but also acts as a stimulus to growth. Evil tendencies inherent in the human race are worked off through play. William James would encourage participation in organized play as a moral equivalent for war. All of these theories show recreation to be fundamental need of human life, both for child and adult.

We find a great deal of truth in all of these explanations of the nature and value of recreation. Play is very clearly a psychological and biological necessity to proper human development. It prepares man for the more difficult aspects of the game of life; it provides a necessary outlet for surplus energy; it revives and strengthens mind and body; and it acts as a definite stimulus to growth, providing an outlet for inborn tendencies which are no longer need-

¹Cabot, Richard Clarke, *What Men Live By*, p. 101.

²*Ibid.*, p. 52.

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ed in our present civilization. Authorities agree that recreational activity is a need of human life. The manner in which this need is to be met is one of the greatest social problems of our day.

B. THE MORAL VALUES OF RECREATION.

The mental and physical needs of man are not the only phases of his life which are touched by recreational activities. There is a very close relationship between the use of leisure time and character development. Professor Mayer, in referring to recreation and leisure time says, "There is no need to argue that these afford great possibility for character building. Almost everyone recognizes that fact. These two factors continue throughout life. The nature of the activities may change, but play and leisure time they still are. During adolescence these two sources exert a most powerful influence. Many leaders have been convinced that they are the largest influences in determining the work and attitude of the individual later in life."¹ Much of the work of the church has done in building an appreciation of the higher things of life in its Youth is often counteracted by the degrading influence of unwholesome amusements. Home life and church training may be of the best, and yet the influence of a bad social life leads to defeat in the fight for character. No matter how uplifting a boy's home training may have been, if he is continually subjected to the environment of the low type of public dance which aims purposely

¹Mayer, Herbert Carleton, The Church's Program for Young People, pp 209-210.

to appeal to the lower emotions of youth, he will not be able to develop those qualities of character which make for the highest type of manhood. I do not propose to discuss here the merits or demerits of the modern dance. What applies to dancing of this vicious type is true of any kind of recreation which tends to break down self-control and those nobler elements of human life upon which all human progress depends. One of the most justifiable criticisms directed against the Church today is that it has largely failed to take into account the need of wholesome social life for young people and has permitted commercialized amusement to varter the souls of youth for mercenary gain. The Church has dealt largely with theory and has made little effort to get down where young people life!

As social life can be made a destructive force in the lives of youth, likewise it can be used as a definite constructive factor in the building of Christian character. Reisner says that young people can be won to Christ through their social nature and that the Church should use a happy social life as a device to draw them into the fellowship of church-going people.¹ While this attitude is bitterly condemned by progressive leaders in Religious Education, it still remains that a wholesome social life is a real contributing factor in building creative, Christian personalities. Let us consider some of the moral values found in constructive recreation.

¹Reisner, Christian F., Social Plans for Young People, Chapter I.

The purpose of the Church is to build a world brotherhood based upon love and goodwill. The attitude of the Christian surely must be one of friendliness if he is to live up to his profession. Social life is not the only avenue through which friendship is produced, but the Church must not lose sight of its possibilities. Animosities and petty jealousies which are often stumbling blocks in the Church's progress, sad to say, can many times be largely eliminated by teaching people to play together and forget their grudges. This truth is carried over from childhood into adolescence and is revealed even among adults. The efforts of the League of Neighbors to promote racial unity and co-operation through play is an evidence of faith in the workability of this principle, and the results thus far attained have certainly justified the effort. A typical example of this type of work is found in the program of this organization as carried out in Elizabeth, New Jersey.¹ The people of this community had lived side by side for years, making little or no effort to become acquainted with their neighbors. Hatred and prejudice were the barriers which prevented them from attaining the unity and co-operation which should have been theirs. Through the efforts of the League of Neighbors, the various races were led to share their folk dances, costumes, songs and instrumental music, their native customs and ideals, and thus to achieve a sense of unity and co-operation hitherto considered impossible. Appreciation is the bridge placed across

¹ Weller,
Democracy Through Neighborhood Organization, p. 2.

the chasms of prejudice in religion, race, and distinctions of class or culture; and this understanding was attained largely by teaching the people to learn how to play together. No one will deny that one of the greatest functions of the Church today is to bring about inter-racial co-operation; and to overlook the value of recreation in this respect is to miss a great opportunity for service. Experience has shown that friendliness and co-operation are often the products of a constructive recreational program.

In this chapter on play and democracy, Dr. Gulick says, "We have yet to learn the place of play and recreation - not as individuals, but as social units. These folk dances and games in which many individuals can participate afford one of the few avenues that exist for the expression of mass feeling. The spirit of unity has been developed as much by these exhibitions of common feeling as by the mere fact of working together."¹ There is some difference among authorities as to the relative value of the fellowship developed through play and work but the essential worth of both is quite generally recognized.

Friendliness and the ability to co-operate are not the only values found in recreation. Self-control is developed in almost all forms of recreational activity which are of a wholesome nature. The value in social activity as interpreted here is not found mainly in the direct formation of habits through games but rather in the opportunity which is afforded

for self-expression in helpful associations between sexes. Social activities and wholesome social intercourse are of tremendous value in cultivating self-control in relations between the sexes.¹ Jane Addams goes so far as to say that "recreation is stronger than vice, and that recreation alone can stifle the lust for vice."² Appreciation of the beautiful is greatly enhanced in social activities such as dramatics, music, art and nature study. Out-door activities such as hiking, camping and nature study afford an excellent opportunity for a cultivation of responsiveness to the Divine. The habit of cheerfulness which is developed in social contacts helps to bring about an outlook upon life which is conducive to the highest type of Christian service. The right type of social contacts not only tend to keep one from becoming morose and dull but they also help to prevent one from becoming too self-centered.

There are those who say that youth should be able to develop an unselfish spirit without dependence upon others through social contacts. While young people are attending school they are afforded many opportunities for association with their fellows; but when the school days are over the situation changes. Those who are dependent upon industry for their livelihood often find very little opportunity for association with others. After a day of hard, tiring work at the factory the tendency is to secure rest and recreation

¹Gray, Men, Women and God, p. 75.

²Addams, Jane, The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets, p. 20.

The self-organization is brought about by the
social activities and relations which are
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The self-organization of the God is the
result of the self-organization of the universe.

for exhausted body and sluggish mind in the type of activity which requires little participation on the part of the worker. This form of recreation is generally found in the selfish type of amusement which has little place for the sharing of life in a constructive, creative way. Our modern machine age is producing a selfish, self-centered type of individual who has little interest in his fellowmen except as they contribute to his own personal profit and pleasure. A constructive, enlivening social life would help to lift youth above its self-centered, tedious existence into an unselfish, co-operative fellowship. The Church must not merely theorize on this question, it must come to have a sympathetic understanding of the problems of youth through knowledge of actual conditions. The problems of youth in industry must be faced just as conscientiously as those of the student group. The needs of life must be the concern of the Church if it is to fulfill its mission.

A careful study of recreation leads one to the conclusion that play does more than to keep the boy or girl engaged in wholesome activity. The value of a constructive social program is to be found in the moral attitudes which it produces. The main purpose of play is not merely to keep boys and girls, and young men and young women, "out of mischief", but to build within them definite qualities of character which make for the most effective living. Friendliness, co-operation, self-control, appreciation of the beautiful, responsiveness to the Divine, cheerfulness, unselfishness, all are by-products of a social program which is built to meet the real needs of youth.

C. RECREATION AND IMMORALITY.

A great deal is being said these days about immorality in the youth of the nation. Many panaceas are being offered to rid society of the problem of Juvenile Delinquency. Jane Addams has been quoted previously as saying that "recreation alone" can stifle the lust for vice. That statement undoubtedly is much overdrawn. Recreation must be recognized, however, as one of society's most effective methods of crime prevention if used in conjunction with other agencies of the community. Statistics show that wherever supervised playgrounds exist in large cities there has been a marked decrease of juvenile delinquency.¹ Although this fact does not apply primarily to the middle and later adolescent group, the same principle carries over into the activities of older boys and girls. Playgrounds do not occupy a very important place in the lives of boys and girls of high school age, but other various social activities take their place. It is merely a matter of change in kind; the result of a lack of adequate recreational facilities is largely the same. Ellwood considers the lack of opportunity for wholesome recreation as one of the major causes of crime. Referring to the influence of social institutions in producing crime he says, "Here comes in especially the lack of opportunities for wholesome social recreation among our poorer classes, particularly in our large cities. Lacking these, the masses resort to the saloon, gambling houses,

¹ Ellwood, Charles A., *Sociology and Modern Social Problems*, p. 339.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the following be done:

1. The Commission should continue to maintain its close contact with the various departments of the Government, particularly the Ministry of Education, in order to secure the necessary co-operation and assistance for the implementation of its programme.

2. The Commission should continue to maintain its close contact with the various departments of the Government, particularly the Ministry of Education, in order to secure the necessary co-operation and assistance for the implementation of its programme.

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10. The Commission should continue to maintain its close contact with the various departments of the Government, particularly the Ministry of Education, in order to secure the necessary co-operation and assistance for the implementation of its programme.

cheap music and dance halls, and vulgar theatrical entertainments while their children have to play in the streets. The influence of all these conditions is undoubtedly to spread the contagion of vice and crime."¹

The **basic** cause of the close relationship of recreational life to crime is largely an economic one. The amusements of the American people are largely dominated by commercial interests. The amount of money required to meet the social obligations set by commercial interests is so great that youth must resort to crime in order to keep up to the standard. Those who make it a business to exploit the play instinct have discovered that men spend most **freely** when under liquor or sex excitement, so they provide their customers with both.² The depleted emotions and stimulated lust which has been produced by this exploitation results in a loss of self-control and self-respect which produces criminal tendencies in a great many cases. The craze for sensationalism which commercialism has purposely cultivated has not been satisfied and in a search for new thrills youth resorts to crime. One of the most effective ways to satisfy this adventurous spirit of youth is to provide social activities which meet this desire for adventure and also tend to build up self-control, self-respect and proper attitudes between the sexes. When the element of commercial domination is removed from the amusement situation and youth determines to control its own leisure-time activi-

¹ Ellwood, Charles A., Sociology and Modern Social Problems, p. 339.

² Edwards, Richard Henry, Popular Amusements, p. 138.

ties a big step forward will be taken in the matter of crime prevention. It would probably not be practical to remove the commercial element entirely, but it should hold a very minor place on our present state of society.

One of the best examples of the power of wholesome social life to actually change character and conduct is found in the recent revival of interest in glee clubs throughout the country. Leaders of gangs of criminals in some of our large cities have been transformed into decent respectable citizens through interest in a community glee club. These instances show what a power uplifting social contacts exert. There is a regenerating influence in the right kind of recreation the powers of which society has only begun to realize. In referring to the relationship between crime and recreation, Charles Platt, President of the National Probation Association says, "I know that juvenile delinquency is, in intention at least, but an expression of misdirected play, and I know that this play, when properly directed, prevents this delinquency. I know, too, that even after a child has fallen into crime, it is play that is the most useful in recovering him."¹ John Lapp estimates that the right kind of recreational leadership in any community will reduce the juvenile delinquency by seventy-five per cent.² As an organization which aims to promote social justice, the Church cannot afford to overlook the great value which these authorities attribute to wholesome recreation as a factor in crime prevention.

¹Platt, Charles, Playground, June 1927, "Leisure and Crime."

²Lapp, G. A., Playground, Nov. '27, "Recreation and So-

D. THE GROWING NEED FOR RECREATION.

The true significance of the value of play or leisure time activity cannot be fully appreciated unless it is seen in the light of the growing complexity of our machine civilization. A generation ago the need for recreation was not nearly so great as it is today. Human labor is becoming increasingly mechanical. Our industrial civilization seems to be losing sight of the value of individual personality and has transferred men into machines. In former days the worker found the satisfaction which comes from creative work. A modern worker is bound to a machine which produces but a very small part of the product. There is very little to appeal to his interest or imagination. With the increase in the use of machinery, various forms of recreation have come to be a practical necessity. One of the by-products of our industrial life is atrophied minds. The monotonous grind of highly specialized factory life slowly causes a deadening of the mind which is disastrous. New sources of interest and contacts with life must be discovered if the individual is to be given a fair opportunity for the complete living which is his due. The physical, mental and moral integrity of the laborer is not only being endangered, it is actually being destroyed by our machine civilization. The most effective method of remedying these ills is to go to the heart of our industrial system and bring about the necessary changes within which will give to the individual a greater opportunity for self-development. In such a course lies only a part of the solution, however. There is certain-

ly a place for a constructive recreational program in the rebuilding of society. Shall the Church take her place in this program or calmly ignore the problem as she has largely done in the past? There may be some doubt as to what part the Church is to play, but as to her responsibility regarding the matter there should be no question.

The use of machinery is not the only factor which has made play a modern necessity. The intensity of the life of today has become so great that common sense demands that greater recognition be given to the need for wholesome recreational activity. The individual of a century ago lived a life of mental ease and quietude in comparison to the man of today. The outstanding characteristic of modern life is restlessness and turmoil. This increased intensity of life is greatly augmenting various kinds of nervous disorders and breakdowns.¹ There is a growing demand for specialists in the treatment of nervous diseases. Excessive nervous strain is causing various forms of melancholia, hysteria and lack of self-control which can be relieved only through proper relaxation and wholesome leisure-time activity.² The church that is interested in the whole of life must take into account the conditions under which people must live and work. One of the bitterest criticisms directed against the church today is that it places most of its emphasis on non-essential theology and makes little effort to bring religion down to where men live. The Church must not only recognize the prob-

¹Richardson, Norman E., The Church at Play, Chapter 2.

²Compare Ross, Ed. Alsworth, Civic Sociology, Chap. 4.

lem of the use of leisure time but it must also take definite steps to raise the standards of our social life it is to live up to its profession and meet the needs of men.

This review of the nature and value of recreation clearly indicates that psychologists, sociologists, and physicians agree as to the great need and essential worth of wholesome social activity. Authorities not only show the value of recreation in its physical and mental aspects but they also reveal its tremendous influence upon the moral life of the individual. The power of social life to develop or destroy character is universally recognized. The growing need for wholesome recreation in our complex, machine controlled society makes the problem of the people's play of increasing consequence. Since the main function of the church is the development of the highest type of individual in a progressive society, the problem of the people's recreational life demands its most earnest consideration. It is a problem which the Church must face, and its response to it will be of vital significance to the future of society.

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PART III. THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARD
RECREATION.

A. The Basis for the Church's Consideration of the Problem.

Our discussion, thus far, has been confined primarily to a consideration of the value of recreation. While most people agree regarding the worth of recreation, there is some difference of opinion as to whether or not the leisure time problem should be a concern of the Church. Is there any valid reason why the Church should evidence an interest in this modern social problem? The previous discussion leads us to answer most emphatically in the affirmative.

The reasons for this conclusion can be very briefly stated. In the first place, a certain type of recreation has a very detrimental effect upon character, as indicated in the previous discussion. The Church's primary purpose is to bring about the highest development of the individual and the highest good of society. Any factors in modern life which are defeating the Church in the attainment of this ideal should certainly be submitted to most careful study by that organization. Investigation has shown that there is a great deal in modern recreation which is blighting personality and defeating the very purpose of the Church. Sociologists and theologians join in the assertion that much of the social pleasure and amusement in our civilization has continued to remain on the pagan level. Commercialized amusements are bartering the souls of youth for mercenary gain, and little is being done to remedy the situation. This state of affairs demands that the Church

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

CHAPTER I

The history of the United States is a story of the growth of a nation from a collection of small, isolated colonies to a great, unified republic. The story begins with the first settlers, who came to the New World in search of a better life. They found a land of vast resources and a people who were eager to learn from the Europeans. The colonies grew and grew, and the people of the colonies began to think of themselves as Americans. They fought for their rights and their freedom, and they won. They created a new nation, a nation that was the envy of the world. The story of the United States is a story of the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. It is a story of the power of the American dream. It is a story that inspires and motivates us all.

at least be concerned about the need for wholesome amusements. It does not necessarily mean that the Church must provide activities to meet the need, but it does mean that the problem must be given careful consideration by the Church.

In the second place, the right kind of recreation can be made^a a positive factor in character development, and therefore merits the concern of the Church. If the Church's business is to build character, it should certainly give consideration to that phase of life which seems to have such a powerful influence upon the conduct of the individual.¹ The right type of recreation has proved to be a very vital factor in crime prevention. Psychologists testify to the positive qualities of character which are developed through a constructive social program. It is very true that there are other agencies in the community which contribute to the social needs of youth but this does not mean that the Church need not be concerned about the problem. Organized religion does not endeavor to meet the economic needs of its people, yet it would be a very ineffective Church which had no concern whatever for the material welfare of the people of the community. The Church must touch the whole of life and in this way minister to the needs of the individual. In the words of Dean Athearn, "The Church's business is to interfere with anything that affects human life." Its most effective policy regarding the recreational life of the community may be confined to a system of education which will arouse public opinion to the need for

¹Mayer, H. C., The Church's Program for Young People, 209f.
Ellwood, Charles, The Reconstruction of Religion, p. 264.

constructive, social life. There is a difference of opinion as to what the policy of the Church should be in this respect. But it is evident that the recreational problem demands the consideration of the Church in our present day civilization.

B. The Antagonistic Position of Historical Christianity.

The past attitude of the Church toward social pleasures and amusement has been largely one of repression and negation. At the time of the beginning of Christianity there was good reason for the Church's condemnatory position. The amusements in vogue throughout the Roman Empire at that time were so characterized by debaucheries and cruelties that the Christians were forced into an uncompromising position on the question of social pleasure.¹ The conflict between Christianity and heathenism was waged not only in the field of theology but it also extended into the arena of the people's play. The nature of Roman games was such that the early Christians could not live up to their convictions and at the same time participate in the popular recreational activities of that time. The theatre was utterly bad; the gladiatorial scenes were exhibitions of legalized, brutal murder which seemed to transform both participants and on-lookers into blood-thirsty beasts; drunkenness, lust and inexcusable cruelty characterized the social life of the time. Only those who were willing to forego earthly pleasure and take a determined stand against

¹Atkinson, Henry A., The Church and the People's Play, Chapter 2.

this mad debauchery were able to bring about any improvement in existing conditions and save the Church from death. There was no place for compromise in such a situation. All amusements were on such a low level that discrimination meant nothing. The only course for the Church to follow was one of uncompromising opposition to the social life of the age.

The great mistake of organized religion was the failure to change from the attitude of negation to a co-operative, constructive position which improved social conditions had made possible. The Puritans in our own country denounced every form of play. The predominant sentiment among religious people was that every amusement was sinful. A pale face was the mark of piety. As late as the eighteenth century a famous educator and philanthropist, Francke of Halle, said: "Play must be forbidden in all its forms. Children must be instructed as to the wastefulness and folly of play, that it distracts their minds from God and will work nothing but harm to their spiritual lives."¹ The Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1784, Baltimore, reads: "We prohibit play in the strongest terms, and in this we have the two greatest writers on the subject that perhaps any age has produced (Mr. Locke and Mr. Rousseau) of our sentiments."² Sin and pleasure were synonymous terms to many religious leaders of a century ago and the idea seemed to be pretty generally accepted. Only in very recent years has organized

¹Atkinson, Henry A., The Church and the People's Play, Chapter 2.

²Ibid.

religion began to realize that play is a God-given instinct and a necessary part of life.

In many cases the Church was entirely justified in assuming a negative attitude toward certain types of amusement, but its great weakness is revealed in its failure to offer a constructive program to meet the need. The dance has been condemned as a "hot-bed of iniquity, a sure pathway to hell" but little or no effort has been made, until recent years, to provide wholesome social life for the young people. Although it may not be the right of the Church to set up a complicated social program under its own roof, it cannot dodge all responsibility for this vital, fundamental need of human life. The attitude of repression without a real constructive program has not been confined to the Puritans of Old New England, but is still prevalent among religious leaders of our present day. The Church will fail to meet the needs of young people as long as it holds a negative attitude toward the amusement situation and makes no effort to grapple with the problem in a constructive way.

C. THE CHURCH AS A SOCIAL CENTER.

The reaction to this repressive, negative attitude of the Church toward recreation has been so extreme in some churches that there is great danger that the Church lose sight of its true mission in placing too great an emphasis upon social activity. The most significant movement in that direction was made by the Methodist Episcopal Church at its General Conference in 1920. At this time the conference recommended the appointment of a director of social and recrea-

tional life in the local Church to supervise the recreational activities that Churches have to provide in the average rural and city community.¹ The purpose of this movement was to make the Church a social center and to make it a definite agency in supplying recreational activities for its young people.

A number of outstanding writers in this field who have published books on the relationship of the Church to the social life of young people, hold the opinion that it is the Church's duty to enter wholeheartedly into the field of recreation and build a comprehensive social program within its own walls.² They maintain that in the past amusement has been largely of a harmful nature and that the time has now come for the Church to assume full responsibility, provide equipment in the way of gymnasiums, club rooms and other necessary recreational facilities, and literally provide for all the social needs of young people. In dealing with the problem of recreational activity, Professor Mayer points out that some churches supply a complete program of all activities, and he states further that "Whenever it tried to become a political power, an educational controller, or a social reformer, it has tended to lose its religious fervor and ideal."³ There is a very real danger on the part of many churches in this violent reaction which is taking place against the past negative attitude of the Church on the question of amusements.

¹Powell, Warren T., Recreational Leadership for Church and Community, p. 5.

²Reisner, Christian F., Social Plans for Young People.
Gates, Herbert Wright, Recreation and the Church
Richardson, Norman E., The Church at Play.

³Mayer, Herbert C., The Church's Program for Young People, p. 197.

Religious leaders are losing sight of the fact that the main function of the Church is Religious Education. In the same way that outside activities in college life have been taking the place of intellectual achievement, the social program of the Church in many localities has shperceded the educational function which should be its central purpose. "The side show is taking the place of the show in the main tent."

One of the main objections to this over-emphasis of social life in the church is that the motive is usually not justifiable. The purpose of an elaborate social program is usually to attract young people into the church. The attitude of Reisner on this matter is typical of many religious leaders. He says, "The fisherman uses the bait that the fish will bite. The soul-saving church will reach after the young people wiht devices thatddraw. A happy social life will do this as will nothing else."¹ Progressive religious educators maintain that this method is unfair, dishonest and is never lasting in its results.

There is a very real place for social life in the Church but over-emphasis on social activity will defeat the very purpose for which the Church exists. If there are other agencies in the community which are satisfactorily meeting the recreational needs of the young people it is not the function of the Church to duplicate these efforts and set up a separate program. Even if the recreational needs of young people are not being met satisfactorily there is a question in the minds of many authorities as to whether the Church

¹Reisner, Christian F., Social Plans for Young People, p. 13.

should provide a definite program, or use other methods to meet this need. The Puritans contended that fun was in itself sinful; some modern Church leaders are going to the other extreme and building a program which indicates that their opinion is that the most important thing in the lives of young people is "having a good time." The value of real fellowship must be recognized in the building of a Christian Society but it must not be made the goal of all Church activity. The social life of the young people in the Church may be of the highest type and yet their interest and effort be so taken up with the details of their recreational program that they have neither time nor energy left to study world problems, develop their spiritual life through worship or endeavour to improve the conditions of their own community. This is not an unlikely example but is often the exact situation when the place of recreation in the Church is over-emphasized. In this instance, the well-developed social program is but a smoke-screen which conceals the inefficient work which is being done. Both leaders and young people are deceiving themselves into believing that they are doing a very unusual piece of work, when in fact they are accomplishing little or nothing. In rural or small town communities where the Church seems to be the only available agency for community betterment, it may be profitably used as a social center, but on the whole, the Church should not take over the entire social activity of the community and endeavour to meet all the recreational

needs of its people. To do so would be to prevent it from giving its most effective service to the community.

D. THE RECREATIONAL TASK OF THE CHURCH: A CORRELATIVE, SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAM.

What, then, is to be the attitude of the Church toward the recreational problem? The position of negation and suppression has proved to be false. To ignore the existence of the problem and make no attempt to meet the need is unthinkable; harmful social activities are undermining the highest, noblest qualities of character and undoing the work which the Church has so carefully cultivated. To supply a complete program of social activities will be to defeat the real purpose for which the Church exists and lessen its efficiency. The solution is to be found in a supplementary program which supplies those activities which are lacking and meets the actual needs of young people. The Church need not actually provide these activities in its own parlors, but it should provide leaders and mold public opinion in such a way that the necessary improvements are introduced. It should make a survey of the agencies influencing youth and determine to what extent they are failing to measure up to wholesome standards of community recreation. Its purpose, then, is mainly an educational one.

We shall consider the first duty of the Church to be the creation of wholesome standards for recreational life. It cannot determine social needs until it has established a

criterion which will distinguish between the good and the bad.¹ There are four general principles which are usually considered to be the most fundamental in determining the nature of wholesome recreational activity. In the first place, wholesome pleasure is recreative. One of the severest indictments against popular amusements is that they wear out body and mind and have no real recreative value. Instead of giving new power and vitality, they sap the energies and weaken the individual physically, mentally and morally. There are many simple pleasures which energize body, mind and spirit. In the second place, our play must be unselfish. It should bring about the improvement of all classes and not one particular group. The concern of the effective church is not for the young people of one denomination but for the boys and girls of the entire community. Our third principle is that wholesome recreation should be educational. Sociologists are coming to agree that the best way to judge institutions is by their educative effects upon human personality.² We are still basing much of our recreational life upon John Locke's discarded principle of "Faculty Psychology." We must realize that pleasures may be educational as well as recreative. Athletics, games, music, drama and all other amusements which are legitimate may be made highly educational without losing any of their recreative value. The fourth principle which should guide the Church in the selection of social pleasures is that

¹Ellwood, Charles A., The Reconstruction of Religion, Chap. 10.

²Ibid.

they should be spiritual; that is, they should be dominated by the higher mental and social elements. As Ellwood says, "Pleasures that are recreative and at the same time unselfish and highly intelligent are spiritual." The spiritual, then, is really a proper combination of the other three above named principles. With these criteria with which to judge social activities, the Church is now ready to take the next step, namely, to discover the recreational needs of the young people of the community.

In order to bring about proper correlation of all activities a survey should be made of all existing agencies which contribute to the social life of the young people of the community. This study will include such institutions as churches, homes, schools, Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Girl Scouts, dance halls, theatres, motion-picture houses, pool rooms, playgrounds, social centers, clubs, lodges, public parks, amusements parks, skating rinks, bowling alleys, professional athletics, loafing places, soft drink parlors, summer camps, etc. After an evaluation of the character of these agencies has been made on the basis of the four principles named above, an attempt should be made to determine how the young people are actually spending their leisure time. According to the results of surveys of this type which have been conducted in the past, about fifty per cent. of the children idle away their time on the streets or other places.¹ The percentage may not be so high with

¹Powell, W. T., Recreational Leadership for Church and Community, Chap. 3.

middle and later adolescent but the need for guidance in leisure time activity is never-the-less very great.

This scientific approach to the use of leisure time will help to prevent duplication and provide actual facts with which to work. On the basis of these facts, the Church may use three methods to bring about the necessary changes. Improvement may be suggested where the agencies are below standard; substitution may be made for questionable amusements; or the undesirable features and agencies may be entirely eliminated. The purpose of the investigation must be to suggest a constructive program to meet the needs of the young people of the community. To merely eliminate the objectionable agencies without any effort to provide something constructive in their place often tends to augment rather than mitigate the evil. The course of procedure may be considered, then, as follows: list the existing recreational agencies; discover how the young people are actually spending their leisure time; evaluate the agencies discovered; and lastly, determine how the Church can help to meet the unmet needs. In the majority of cases, this is the only line of procedure which will bring lasting results.

The next step, after the discovery of actual needs, is to mold public opinion to bring about the necessary changes in the social life of the young people of the community. This is perhaps the greatest avenue of approach open to the Church regarding the problem of amusements. Professor Ellwood says, "Social religion must in this matter (social pleasure), as in so many others, lead especially through creating public opin-

ion and public conscience. That is its true function, and the chief method of its program of social redemption."¹ The community must be made to see the importance of leisure-time activities to the life of its young people. The results of the survey, together with the experience of other communities, should indicate which of the agencies are having a harmful effect upon the youth and to what extent recreational needs are not being met.

In an educational program of this nature the Church must, of course, take a definite stand regarding the so-called "questionable" amusements, namely, dancing, card-playing and the theatre. This problem is not so acute as in former years for the modern Church is taking a more tolerant attitude than it did a generation ago. However, a great amount of harm has been done to organized religion through the indiscriminate condemnation of certain classes of amusements. Religious fanatics and a certain type of social reformers have not been able to see that in most cases the evils are not inherent in the amusements themselves, but in the associations which surround them. That there are a few exceptions to this rule, there is little need for argument. Social practices which are in themselves immoral and contrary to law cannot be tolerated by the true Christian Citizen under any circumstances.

The "ultra-modern" dance of today, carried to the extreme, is clearly deteriorating in its effect upon humanity.

¹Ellwood, Charles A., The Reconstruction of Religion, p. 276.

personality. It is rather illuminating to note the opinions of some of our prominent dancing masters as to the evil effects of the modern jazz dance. F. T. Bott, Dayton, Ohio, says, "The dance is a worse evil than the saloon used to be, because it affects our young people especially. Unlike liquor a great deal of the harm done is not gradual, but direct and immediate. Jazz music makes a purely sensual appeal and calls out low and rowdy instincts. All dancing masters know this to be a fact. We have seen the effect of jazz on our pupils."¹ J. L. Guyon, Chicago, Ill., says, "Dancing has become a greater menace than liquor, segregated vice, or the brothels, from which much of it sprang."² This bitter condemnation of the modern jazz dance coming from prominent dancing masters is quite significant and worthy of our deepest consideration. Their denunciation, however, is directed against the jazz dance and does not include those of the type of the folk dance. The dance, if properly conducted, might easily be made an adjunct in the development of the truest and best type of life.³ The revival of interest in the typical folk dances of various countries is heartening evidence of the fact that modern young people can find real enjoyment in social activities which lead to the higher, nobler qualities of human life.

In various forms of amusement, other than the dance, the only sensible, consistent attitude for the Church to as-

¹Wegener, Albert Ben, Church and Community Recreation, p. 113.

²Wegener, Albert Ben, Church and Community Recreation, p. 113.

³Atkinson, H. A., The Church and People's Play, Ch. 5.

sume is that of "discrimination rather than universal prohibition."¹ Merely placing "taboos" upon certain forms of social pleasure has proved to be ineffective. Forcing compliance to the will of another without the inner assent defeats its own purpose. Young people must be taught to discriminate in their social pleasures, if they are to attain the highest type of character development. The progressive Church will base its attitude toward amusements upon this principle.

The Church must not be content with its program of guiding public opinion in the assuming of proper attitudes toward social pleasures; nor can it afford to be content with securing definite action on the part of the community to alleviate existing evils. It must assume a large share of the responsibility in providing leadership for recreational activities. Those who object to inculcating social activities into the program of the Church may in many instances be justified in their convictions, but they cannot consistently refuse to recognize the responsibility of the Church in providing leadership in recreational activities. Young people as well as adults should be made to feel the great value of a wholesome social life and the need for adequate, well-trained leaders to direct the play life of the community. Leadership in play affords a field of expressional activity which is unusually fruitful. Training classes in recreational leadership are not out of place in a program of Religious Educa-

¹Gates, Herbert Wright, Recreation and the Church, p. 71.

tion. This field offers an opportunity which the Church cannot afford to miss; its benefits are realized both in the lives of the leaders, and the children and young people of the community who participate in group play activities.

The extent to which the Church should provide leisure time activities in its program is entirely dependent upon circumstances. There is no established rule. In some rural communities the Church may be called upon to provide all of the social life for the young people of the community. On the other hand, some city churches may have little or no need for a recreational program. In many situations, the Church can render much more effective service by cooperating with existing agencies than by setting up a detailed recreational program under its own supervision. In most cases its function should be a supplementary, cooperative one. The effective church will not invest its time, effort and money in social activities which can be done as well, or better, by other agencies or by cooperating with other local organizations. There is already too much duplication in the church school without additional social activities to add to the burden. One of the Church's greatest tasks is to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

As in all other phases of the Church's activity, the main consideration should be the needs of the individual. If the opportunities for wholesome social life are lacking and there are no other agencies to meet the need, the Church must assume the responsibility and provide the program. If the Church realizes, however, that its main function is an educational one, it

will so help the community to see the need for recreation that proper agencies will be created which will meet the need. Only in exceptional cases is it the duty of the Church to set up a complete recreational program. Its main responsibility is the creation of constructive public opinion and cooperation with existing agencies to meet the actual needs of the young people of the community.

E. THE RELATION OF EXPRESSIONAL ACTIVITY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

The subject of expressional activity must be given a definite place in the discussion of the attitude of the Church toward recreation. Many recreational leaders have evidently not discovered the fact that a much deeper, more lasting spirit of fellowship is developed through participation in creative work than in merely playing together. Much of the time and effort expended in perfecting and executing a program of social activities could be more profitably spent in the development of the expressional life of young people in the accomplishing of worth-while tasks. There is little doubt but that a deeper, more lasting fellowship is found in working together than in playing together.¹ There is a place for pure fun as found in social amusements, but there is no reason why much of the fellowship of young people cannot be developed in the accomplishing of worthwhile tasks. The greatest opportunity for the development of wholesome social life is found in helping to solve practical problems.

¹Compare: Reisner, C.F., Social Plans for Young People, Ch. 9.

²Fosdick, H. E., The Meaning of Service, Chas. 2 and 4.

The real problem of the Church, then, in providing for the social needs of its young people, resolves itself largely around the matter of expressional activities. A fellowship which is based only on social good times is superficial and of little lasting value. "Our young people today should learn to know each other through working and playing together."¹ When organized religion has succeeded in developing an effective program of expressional activity, the problem of the proper use of leisure time will be well on its way toward a solution. The subject is too broad to justify a detailed discussion at this point. It must necessarily be limited to a few suggestions as to types of service which are conducive to the experience of a vital creative fellowship.

The sources of materials of expressional activity are generally classed under four main heads, namely, home, school, life that centers about employment, and recreation and leisure time.² These centers of conduct in everyday living reveal the opportunities which are available for helping the youth to transfer theory into life. The spirit of fellowship which is inspired through cooperative effort to bring about improvement in these phases of life is a real contribution to the spiritual life of the individual. Community service activities which meet a vital need, whether material or spiritual, have a definite place in the program of the Church. The hours spent in practice in a community glee club provide pleasurable social contacts which equal almost

¹Mayer, H.C., The Church's Program for Young People, p.207
²Ibid, pp. 208,209.

any well-planned "party." And the pleasure resulting from participation in the musical programs for the benefit of hospitals, prisons, industrial groups and community gatherings has a very large place in the social development of young people. The same is true of dramatics and pageantry. In referring to the socializing value of dance rehearsals in pageantry, Esther Bates says, "Every social worker plans programs for boy and girl groups, devising a score of ways to entertain them, whereas a dance rehearsal provides its own, and contributes to public entertainment besides."¹ A wide-awake young people's group can make a vital contribution to the educational life of the community by arousing interest in local, national and world problems. The goal of the Church should not be to devise play activities to interest the young people, but rather to plan programs which have real socializing value and at the same time make a vital contribution to the welfare of the community. Music and dramatics are not the only fields of activity which contribute to this two-fold purpose. The task of the Church is to discover various other resources of expressional nature which will provide the most effective means for character development.²

After a study of the opportunity and responsibility of the Church in modern life, we are led to the conclusion that its recreational task is one of a correlative, supplementary nature. The old attitude of repression and negation is clearly contrary to the true spirit of Christianity and defeats the

¹Bates, Esther Willard, The Art of Producing Pageants, pp. 87, 88.

²Reisner, Christian F., Social Plans for Young People, Ch. 9.

very purpose of the Church, namely, to accomplish the highest development of Christian Personality. The extreme to which many churches have gone in making the Church the center of all of the social activities of the community is to be deplored as much as the attitude of repression and negation. An over-emphasis of social activity in the program of church defeats the very purpose of the church and seems to rob it of its spiritual value. The function of the Church is to spiritualize all life; and making it the center of all recreational activity tends to cause it to lose sight of its central purpose. The attitude of the Church toward recreation must be one of sympathetic cooperation. Its task is to educate public opinion to bring about needed improvements and to cooperate with existing agencies so as to meet the social needs of the young people in the most effective way. Its main social function is not to provide an extensive program of social activities but to help discover the actual needs, provide leadership and create public opinion which will maintain high standards of amusement in the community. To what extent the Church should provide recreational activities depends, of course, upon local circumstances, but its main function is an educational one. The greatest opportunity for the Church to develop a spirit of creative fellowship among its young people is to be found in expressional activity which will enable youth to transfer theory into conduct, the problem of supplying wholesome amusement for young people will be greatly lessened. This is its most effective approach to the solution of the problem.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEM.

PART IV. PROPOSED SOLUTIONS OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEM.

The great need for the provision of wholesome social activities for the youth of the nation has resulted in some experiments during the past two or three years which seem to be proving quite successful. A great number of the programs of local churches might be given here to show what is being done regarding the problem of social pleasures, but this discussion will be limited to a survey of the two most promising movements of our present day. These two movements center about the "Slow Clubs" and the Community Young People's Council.

A. THE RISE OF THE "SLOW CLUBS."

The "Slow Clubs" arose as a reaction against the present day jazz methods of entertainment. It began among the young people of Philadelphia as a method of providing healthy amusement through the medium of clubs created and managed by the young people with the cooperation of existing social agencies.¹ The movement soon spread to Chicago and other of the larger cities throughout the country and is continuing to make very rapid progress. In May, 1927, Philadelphia had twenty-eight chapters with a membership of 15,000, and a waiting list of 25,000. There are those who believe that this revolt is "the prelude of the establishment of an American Youth Movement that will have just as profound an effect upon American life as the German Youth Movement has had on modern post-war Germany."²

The idea originated in the ethical column of the Philadel-

¹Literary Digest, April 2, 1927.
The Playground, May 1927.

²Mind and Body, Feb 1928.

phia Evening Bulletin, inspired by letters from young people who felt "out of step with the wild parties of this jazz-mad age." These letters expressed revolt against the demand for easy familiarity in order to keep up social relations between the sexes. Both fellows and girls felt that they were being denied many social pleasures because they did not believe in going to the extreme in their conduct with the opposite sex. The suggestion was made that a club be formed, consisting of young man and women who believed in moderation in their social life. The club was organized and anyone between the ages of sixteen and thirty-two were admitted to membership on the provision that they refrain from the use of intoxicating liquor and the practice of "petting." Dramatics, debating and literary activities took the place of the extreme, modern, jaxx dance as a means of entertainment. Under the organization scheme there are six divisions: dramatic, literary, athletic, hiking, camera clubs, and boys' and girls' clubs. In the Philadelphia organization there is a chapter devoted to the development of special interest groups. There is an Art and Sketching chapter composed of fifty members especially interested in the study of art. The program includes instruction, lectures and trips through the art galleries of the city. A Talent Chapter is organized for a special study of poetry. A special dramatic and literary section meets for expression in dramatics and literary activities. Many plays are written and produced by the members themselves. An opportunity is thus afforded for the expression of a wide range of interests in the activities of the club. Outdoor activities are also a special feature of the program of the organization. The back-

ground of the movement is clearly cultural with a trend toward dramatics, literary activities, and old fashioned and moderate dancing as a substitute for a three-hour-dance program. The program is not merely entertaining; it is creative in its purpose and encourages the cultural elements in the lives of its members.

This new "revolt of youth" is quite different from the type of revolt so commonly referred to today which is characterized by a desire for complete freedom from restraint without regard for moral laws and accepted custom. It is the expression for a new freedom; a freedom from a laxity in conduct which cramps the personality and prevents the most complete development of the individual. Youth has here demonstrated, in a most effective way, that it can find more real enjoyment in wholesome social activity than it can in the modern jazz methods of entertainment. The name was adopted in a spirit of defiance to the opposition which would naturally arise, with the realization that "to adopt the enemies' jeer as a badge is to make the jeer stingless." The rapid growth of the movement, which now includes thousands of young people throughout the country, is one of the most encouraging factors in modern life. Its remarkable success certainly justifies the experiment.

What is to be the attitude of the Church toward this type of a youth movement? It is distinctly an effort to provide social activities independent of the Church, but that does not detract from its value. Its advantage lies in the fact that it is controlled by the young people themselves, in-

dependent of any outside organization. As long as it keeps its high ideals, the progressive church will give its most hearty support and co-operation to the movement. No distinction is made in the organization as to creed, which gives it a distinct advantage over the church sponsored organization which is dependent for its membership upon those affiliated with some particular denomination. The task of the Church is not to set up a competing program but to bear its share in providing a leadership which will keep the standards high and maintain the original purpose of the movement. There are those who maintain that this form of organization is superior to any church-sponsored movement because it is not handicapped by the "taint" of organized religion. This is a sad commentary upon the past work of the Church, but it contains a great deal of truth. The Church must win back the confidence of a great many young people if it ever hopes to overcome the reproach which has been heaped upon it. Its attitude toward the "Slow Club" Movement must be one of hearty support and co-operation.

B. THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

Another angle from which the amusement situation may be met is through the co-operative efforts of the young people's organizations of the churches of the community. The Young People's Community Council¹ seems to offer the best approach to the problem.

In the past few years there has been a rising feeling of

¹See, Mayer, H. C., The Origin and Development of the Community Young People's Council.

dissatisfaction with the failure of separate denominations to meet the needs of young people. There has been growing with this dissatisfaction a trend toward greater co-operation between denominational groups in young people's work. The first move toward co-operation in young people's work was evidenced in the first state boys' conference which was held in Everett, Massachusetts, January 28, 1891. The organization of the Older Boys' Inter-Sunday School Council in Toronto was another definite step in that direction. Then followed the establishment of Boys' and Girls' Sunday School Councils for the purpose of securing united efforts of various denominations in Sunday School work. The latest development is the Young People's Community Council, composed of representative young people from the churches of the community, the purpose of which is to promote co-operative activity among the young people of the community.

The organization of the council is quite simple and depends upon the local situation. The original plan involved separate boys' and girls' councils with two representatives from each church or Sunday school. The council plan as generally accepted at the present time is one unit with both boys and girls as representatives. (In small communities, each church is represented by two boys, two girls and one adult advisor. In larger cities, one boy, one girl, and an adult is the more satisfactory arrangement. There is no established rule as to the method of selecting these representatives. In some instances they are chosen by the young

people of the church; sometimes they are appointed by church officials. The ideal method is the selection of the representatives themselves in the most democratic way possible. The age limits are usually placed at 16 to 24, including the middle and later adolescent periods. The Council is divided into the needed officers and committees to carry on the program in the most effective way possible. The committees are usually divided into two groups: the Standing Committee, which deals with publicity and membership, and the Special Committee, which arranges for young people's conferences, rallies, recreational events and other special activities. It is not necessary to go further into a detailed report of the machinery of organization, which is dependent very largely upon local conditions. Regardless of the specific type of organization, the council idea purposes to unite the young people of the community in worth while co-operative activity.

The objectives of the council activities which are generally agreed upon by community leaders may be stated as follows:

1. To develop and maintain a high standard of young people's work in each church school within the Council area.
2. To promote four-fold, physical, social, mental, and religious, inter-church school activities among the young people of the church schools of the city.
3. To discover and train young people for leadership in the local church and community program of religious education.
4. To unite the young people of the church schools of the community in a definite and constructive program of Christ-

ian service and community betterment.¹

This statement of objectives shows that there is a very definite place in the program of the Community Council for social activities for the young people of the community. The recreational phase of the work is only a minor part of the program, however, and must not be over-emphasized at the expense of the Religious Educational aspect of the Council's work. The following suggested five-year program as outlined by W. Hobart Hill gives a concise idea of the Council activities and shows the relative importance of definite recreational projects:

First Year -

- City Young People's Conference.
- Father and Son Week.
- Christmas Carolling.
- Organized Class Survey.
- Council Minstrel Show.
- Organized Class Campaign.
- Easter Sun-Rise Prayer Service.
- Boys' Base Ball League.
- Young People's Picnics in each church.
- Anti-Summer Slump Campaign.
- Rally Week Programs.

Second Year -

- City Young People's Conference.
- Father and Son Week. (School.
- Promotion of Teacher Training Class in each Church
- Watch-Night services in charge of the young people.
- Organized class and department survey.
- Organized class demonstrations.
- Council play.
- Win-One Campaign in each church.
- Easter Sun-Rise Service.
- Mother and Daughter Week.
- Young People's Day in each church.
- Securing helpers for the Church Vacation Schools.

¹Hill, H.H., The Essentials of a Community Young People's Program.

Out-door Community-wide Vesper Service.
Church School Membership Drive.

Third Year.

Young People's Conference - limited to class and department officers.
Father and Son Week.
Young People's Leaders' Training Class.
Church School Survey.
Boys and Girls Basket Ball League.
Council dramatics.
Local Church Socials.
Pocket Testament League Campaign.
Easter Sun-rise Service.
Mother and Daughter Week.
City-wide Young People's Treasure Hunt.
Inter-church aquatic meet.
Promotion of Summer Training Camps and Conferences.
Week-end Council Retreat for consideration of plans for following year.

Fourth Year.

Conference - class and department officers only.
Father and Son Week.
Young People's Section of a Community Training School.
Christmassparties in hospitals and orphanages.
Missionary reading contest in each church.
Council play.
Local church ice-skating socials.
Inter-church debate.
Find Yourself Campaign.
Mother and Daughter Week.
Religious Pagenatry Night in each church.
Camp-fire meeting to promote camp conferences.
Boys' Base Ball League and Girls' Playgruund Ball League.
Home Department Day under direction of young people

Fifth Year.

Conference - same limitations as before.
Father and Son Week.
Young People's Section of Community Training School.
City-wide Survey.
Red Cross Stamp Sale.
Church School Workers Library Campaign.
Council play.
Bible Base Ball League.
Go-to-church Sunday for Young People.
Easter Sun-rise Service.
Church Treasure Hunt Socials.

Mother and Daughter Week.
Promotion of Children's Week.
Nature Study Hikes.
Camp Promotion.
Council Week-end Retreat.¹

This program is merely suggestive of the type of activities which may be promoted by the Young People's Community Council. All of the activities suggested contribute to the social life of the individual to some degree. It is evident, however, that about forty per cent. of them are distinctly social in nature and have special recreational value. No one activity can be exclusively classified as social, educational or religious; each phase of life contributes to the other. Many of the projects which are promoted entirely for their specific religious value are also distinctly social. A community program for young people should, therefore, be of such a nature as to meet both the religious and social needs of youth. The use of constructive expressional activity as a creator of fellowship is very evident at this point. There is a place, however, for the provision of special social activities for the sole purpose of meeting the social needs of young people. The program as outlined above contains several plans of distinctly recreational nature which Community Councils have found to be very successful.

The Ice Carnival offers a program of outdoor winter sport which contains unusual social value. Snow-shoeing and skiing afford opportunity for outdoor recreation which is practically unexcelled. A co-operative effort on the part of the young people of the community to promote a spirit of fellowship through

¹Hill, H. Hobart, The Essentials of a Community Young People's Council Program.

outdoor social activities will do a great deal to provide that spirit of unity without which very little progress can be made. The success of a program of outdoor sports is dependent, of course, upon the local situation, but every community offers some opportunity for outdoor sports. Tournaments in baseball, basketball and tennis have proved to be very successful in the Council's Community Program. Community Festivals can also be promoted by the young people through the Council organization.

A Community House or Social Center is one of the great needs of the average community. Practically the only opportunity for amusement in most communities is to be found in commercialized pool halls, theatres, and dance halls. The establishment of a social room through the co-operative effort of the young people would aid greatly in the raising of the standards of recreation and would help to meet a great need in the lives of the youth. Supervision of such a project by the Council would seem to be the most satisfactory. In as far as possible, the young people themselves should be permitted to manage their own recreational life. The high standards maintained in the "Slow Club" Movement, indicate that the young people can be trusted to control their own social activities without outside supervision.

The suggestion that the Young People's Community Council sponsor a Literary Society for all of the young people of the community is a plausible one. A similar idea has been carried out successfully in the Circuit Young People' Council

and the Circuit Teen-Age Council.¹ A Community Literary Society of this type would stimulate the thinking of the young people upon national and world problems, enhance their appreciation of the best type of music and literature, if properly conducted, and afford an excellent means of providing wholesome social activities. The objection to this proposal is that it would entail the creation of another organization in the face of the fact that the multiplicity of organization is one of the Church's greatest weaknesses. Our main consideration, however, is the needs of young people and if a little additional machinery is needed to make the community program more effective it must be taken as the unavoidable. Very little organization would be needed, however, with the support of the Council organization. A more feasible plan might be to make it a function of the Council to provide community-wide literary meetings every two or three weeks, without the establishment of a special organization. This task could be delegated to a special committee of the Council. This would dispense with an additional organization and greatly simplify the work of the Council. This project would probably be more suited to small communities, although the "Slow Clubs" have demonstrated that literary clubs, if properly conducted, can be maintained very successfully in the large cities.

One of the greatest opportunities for the Community Council is to be found in the promotion of activities distinctly musical in nature. Community glee clubs, quartets

¹Thompson, James V., Handbook for Workers with Young People, pp. 187, 188.

and orchestras are not only of great socializing value but they also provide a means of expression in a serviceable way.¹ The use of musical programs in hospital social service activities, educational programs, and general community uplift is one of the Church's greatest opportunities for expressional activity. The Playground and Recreation Association has demonstrated the great value of musical activities in its creation of Ukulele Clubs, Harmonica Bands, Mandolin Clubs, Orchestras and other forms of musical organizations. The Community Council can be an important factor in the effort to promote racial unity through the popularization of the folk songs of various countries. There is a wealth of material available in the Negro Spirituals, Indian Music, French Canadian Folks Songs, old Irish Tunes, Scotch Folk Songs, and the music of England, France, Russia, Italy, Sweden, Spain, and many other countries throughout the world. The great value of the folk dances in the promotion of racial unity has been referred to previously.

A great many more suggestions might be made regarding the various types of activity which a Young People's Community Council can promote in the endeavour to provide a constructive recreational program. The aim of the Council should be to aid the churches of the community to develop a constructive program of expressional activity for its youth.² If the Council can develop an effective program of expressional activity it will need very little further planning to meet the social

¹Felton, Ralph A., The Epworth League in Rural Community Service, p. 33.

²Mans, Cynthia Pearl, Youth and the Church, Chap. 10.

needs of the young people. Great caution must be taken to prevent the use of too much time and energy in activities which are purely recreational in nature, thereby neglecting the opportunities for community service. A Council program which is based on the actual needs of young people cannot go far astray.

There is some difference of opinion as to which of the two plans suggested will be the most satisfactory. The advantage of the "Slow Club" idea is that the freedom with which young people outside of the churches will co-operative with the movement. Those who have an antagonistic attitude toward the church will be very slow about co-operating with a movement which is sponsored by Church Young People's Organizations. On the other hand, the recreational program of the Young People's Community Council is supported by a permanent institution and is much more likely to be lasting. The recreational program of the Community Council is also likely to maintain higher standards than the one which is promoted by a group of young people who may have little or no concern for the Church or the ideals for which it stands. We have no right to maintain that a social program which is not connected directly with organized religion will be conducted on lower standards than one which is sponsored by the Church. Its leaders may be of the highest type of Christian character, and the standards may, in many cases, be even higher than those of the Church sponsored social program. It does seem, however, that the Council Program gives more assurance of a higher standard of social life. The two plans are essentially alike; each having as its central

purpose the substitution of the control of amusements by the young people themselves, for commercialized domination. Experience has shown that the plan is workable. It now remains for youth to assert itself and join with those who have determined to govern their social life according to their own good judgment and not according to the dictates of unprincipled commercialism.

PART V.

CONCLUSION

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A study of modern society reveals the tremendous influence recreation exerts upon the life of American Youth. The power of social contacts to make or mar human personality is very evident. There is some difference of opinion among authorities as to the nature of recreation, but all agree concerning its great value to the individual. One of the problems of the sociologist is to "find outlets for man's natural impulses which will be at the same time advantageous for both society and the individual."¹ It is the belief of the sociologist that this can be done, in part, through recreations and amusements.² The failure of society to provide wholesome amusements for its youth, is largely responsible for the present state of immorality and crime which is all too prevalent in our nation today. Popular amusements which are dominated by commercial interests and are intended to appeal to the lower emotions are decidedly harmful to the highest development of the individual. It is likewise true that wholesome recreation tends to build positive qualities of character in the individual and is a very important factor in the building of a creative personality.

It is thus plainly evident that recreational activities are of value both in providing an outlet for man's natural impulses in such a way as to bring no evil to society, and in contributing in a very positive way to the highest development of the individual. The complex nature of our modern machine civ-

¹Ellwood, Charles A., *The Psychology of Human Society*, 300.
²*Ibid.*

ilization has greatly increased the need for recreation and demands that definite steps be taken to make the best possible use of our growing leisure time. In view of the influence of recreation upon conduct, and in face of the growing need for wholesome social life for the youth of our nation, the Church cannot afford to be indifferent to the question of popular amusements.

The attitude of the Church toward the problem of social pleasure cannot be one of negation and suppression, as has been largely true in the past. The old idea of pleasure as sin has no place in the Church of today but the over-emphasis of church-centered social activity has been a great hindrance to effective work in a number of modern church programs. The importance of entertainment as a means of vitalizing social life has been greatly over-emphasized in a great many places. Some churches are using the slogan "Saving Souls Through Church Suppers" and have seemingly lost sight of the spiritual values which are being sacrificed in their endeavor to provide entertainment for the members of their congregation.¹ The Church can neither assume the Puritanical attitude of negation nor the modern idea of Church-centered recreation. It must consider its main function to be that of educating the public regarding the recreational needs of the community and so to bring about necessary changes in the social life of the young people. It must lead especially in creating public opinion and in providing capable leadership to meet the needs.

See: Fiske, Charles, Scribner's Magazine, March 1928, "Saving Souls Through Church Suppers."

The Church must also co-operate with and supplement the existing agencies and provide its own program when the situation demands it.

The building of expressional activities provide one of the greatest opportunities for development of social life. And the Church should realize that a deeper spirit of fellowship is usually generated through work than through play. The problem of the creation of a wholesome social life for young people can be largely met through an effective program of expressional activity. The methods which are to be used to meet this social problem will depend largely upon local situations, but every Church must assume responsibility for the recreational life of youth and give its support to the development of a constructive program.

The "Slow Club" Movement has presented a workable plan for providing wholesome recreation in this modern age. Its unusually rapid growth has caused some people to be somewhat skeptical as to its permanence. Although it may give the appearance of a mere passing fad, it does have some very commendable features and is an indication of the attitude of thousands of American young people toward present day jazz methods of entertainment.

A more satisfactory plan is found in the Young People's Community Council idea which has proved to be very successful in various parts of the country. The advantage of a program of recreation backed by the Community Council is the fact that the movement is supported by a permanent institution, the Church, which gives greater assurance of its permanent value.

The Council plan also gives a greater guarantee of the maintenance of high standards in social life. Although it will be necessary to provide some activities which are purely recreational, the main task of the Young People's Council will be to develop an effective program of expressional activity which will help to meet community and world-wide needs as well as the social needs of the local group. This is the greatest single factor to be considered in the solution of the problem.

This brief study of the place of the Church in the social life of young people reveals the great need which exists today for a common-sense approach to the problem of popular amusements. That there is a growing need for the right kind of leisure time activity, there is little doubt. The tremendous influence of social life upon the character of our youth is beyond question. The devastating effect of commercialized amusements upon the boys and girls of the nation is one of the blots on our modern civilization. Experience has shown that there is a way to fight social pleasure to that high plane which will make it a means of developing the noblest, richest type of personality. The Church must not fail to bear its share of the responsibility in this great program for youth.

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